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The Highlander

Thursday Nov 6 2025 | Issue 714

INSIDE: REMEMBRANCE DAY PAGES 10-13 FREE

Hawks soar to Kawartha title

Graham Backus and Owen Whittaker hold the Kawartha senior boys' volleyball championship trophy aloft after defeating Port Hope High School and Ecole Monseigneur Jamot in back-to-back games on home court at Hal High Nov. 4. For more, see page 19.
Photo by Mike Baker.

Giving County veterans a proper burial

By Lisa Gervais

It's a frosty morning as genealogist Adele Espina climbs out of her pick-up truck on one of the internal roads at Evergreen Cemetery in Haliburton.

She knows exactly where she is going thanks to cemetery records.

She stops at one gravesite, marked only with a small Canadian flag she had placed there the day before. No gravestone. But that is something Espina is working to rectify.

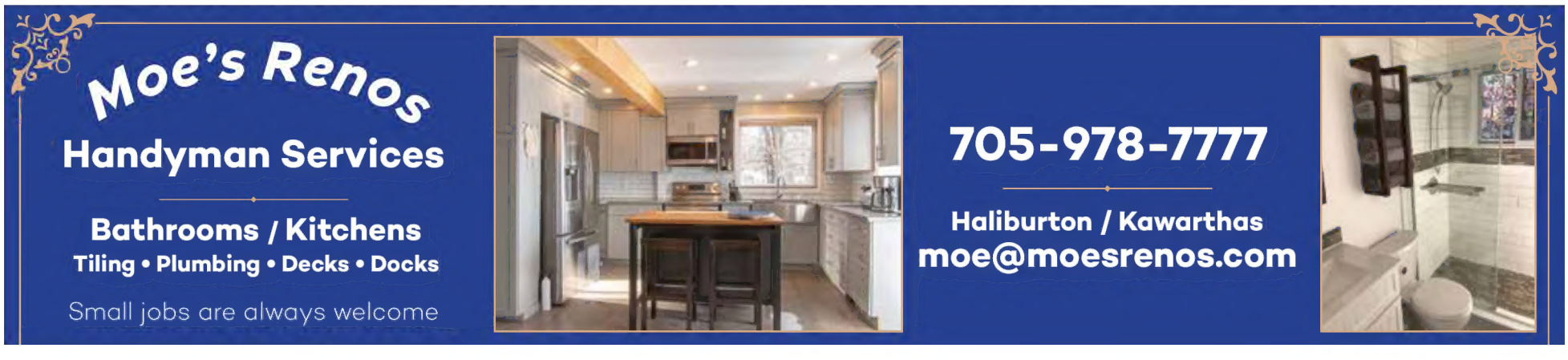
Her research has unearthed that the man buried beneath her feet is Harry Adams, who served with the 109th Battalion in the First World War. Adams was born in 1864 in England, but moved to Canada. He enlisted at the age of 50, giving a false birth year, and died in 1948 at the ripe old age of 84.

He is buried in a McKnight family plot, since his last wife was a McKnight. For some reason, perhaps financial, there was never a marker of any sort erected.

Espina has found out quite a lot about Adams, partially through Ancestry.com, including that he married three times. She later opens a folder over a hot drink at Castle Antiques in Haliburton and reveals gems such as service records, death certificate, and photos of Adams with his regiment taken outside the Dysart et al municipal office and elsewhere.

She has submitted the necessary paperwork to the Last Post Fund, a national

Continued **'Who'** on page 2



Highlander news

ttalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in front of the Haliburton town hal
o. Charlie Tripp, Ross Henderson, Dick Hope, S. Lindsay, Sgt. Major Leonard Burt
s. Ed Austin, Ab Wheeler, Wes Baker, Walter Kellett, Harry Murray, George Dec
ay, Harry Adams, unknown, N. Vangesen, Guy Hall, Bill Emery, Stan Cooper, H.
m McCullough, Elwood Austin, Jim Rivers, Dick Gregory. Third row: Russell Cur
Albert Burford, Wm. Logan, Wes Coneybeare, unkr
Jack Preston and Albert Curry.

Left: Adele Espina squats down at the grave of Harry Adams. Right: Harry Adams with the 109th Battalion. *Photos by Lisa Gervais.*

'Who more to be remembered than our veterans'

non-profit organization that provides grave markers for veterans. Espina said it might take a couple of years before Adams gets his.

The genealogist estimates there are approximately 50 veterans requiring grave markers across Haliburton County. She's on a quest to get them all one.

"There's plenty of soldiers or veterans who are buried here and do have military markers…and a lot of family markers that veterans are attached to, and then there are veterans who, for whatever reason, slipped through the cracks and have no monuments whatsoever," Espina says while standing at Adams' grave.

Espina said part of her niche in the Haliburton Highlands Genealogy Group is cemeteries. She has access to burial maps. She jokes there is a name for that: taphophile; a person who loves cemeteries, gravestones, and funerary art and history.

"Well, I don't think any of us want to be forgotten … and who more to be remembered than our veterans," she says of her journey.

For each vet she researches, she builds a tree on Ancestry.com and gathers all the information she can. She's also now using the recently-released Haliburton Highlands Digital Archives of newspapers. "I've just been vacuuming up any details that I can find and it's been helpful."

Her dad was in the Royal Canadian Air Force in the Second World War, seconded to the U.K.'s Royal Air Force, just 19 when he went on his first bombing mission.

Her maternal grandfather had been with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the First World War, but never got to France, as he came down with the Spanish flu, but recovered, and worked in a hospital. Library and Archives Canada have records of him, right down to his sickness temperatures. Her daughter went to Royal Military College, serving as a combat systems engineer in the Navy before going to medical school.

Espina's interest began when she worked for the Minden Museum, on a sesquicentennial project, looking into military personnel records. She came up with over 500 people in Haliburton County who were born in the Highlands and served, or lived there and served. She did an exhibit at the cultural centre in 2009. "I plastered the walls of the Welch room … with all their attestation papers and the exhibit was really well received. That's what got me going on the people who had served."

She talks about a vet who had a military grave marker until 1991, but it's gone now. "So, I can get him another one." All she has to do is prove the person is dead, buried in that particular cemetery, and that they served in the military.

She added, "this is something concrete that I can do. I think the reward for me will be the day that those markers are put up."

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Highlander news

OPP roll out town halls to sparse crowd

By Lisa Gervais

The new detachment commander for the Haliburton Highlands OPP said she is committed to holding more town halls in the County in future – despite a disappointing turnout for an event Oct. 29 in Minden Hills.

People said they only found out about it after seeing a post on the County website that day. OPP said they had advertised the event on X (formerly Twitter) on Oct. 10. Minden Hills Coun. Tammy McKelvey suggested it would have been better to have advertised in local newspapers.

Staff Sgt. Deb McClure said it was a learning opportunity for them, and they would review marketing in future.

"I think these community outreaches are very important, and it gives me an opportunity to hear from you and vice versa. Collectively, we are a team in this community," she told a sparse crowd.

She said she planned to hold similar events in future in all four Haliburton County municipalities. She would not commit to how frequently the town halls would be held or when the next one will be.

McClure said the town halls are about education, safety and conversation. There were officers talking about traffic and road safety, being safe on the water, preventing property crime, school safety, and the Mobile Crisis Response Team.

She added, "we're working hard to increase our presence in schools, and build stronger relationships with youth; to make our roads and neighbourhoods safer places. We know that real progress does not happen in isolation. It happens through partnerships. It isn't just about hearing from you, but about working with all of you. We need you to be the eyes and ears in our community. When you see something, please say something. When you have concerns, share them with us. Your insights help us respond more effectively to keep the community safe together."

Haliburton Highlands OPP detachment commander, Deb McClure, and detachment board chairman, Andrew Fletcher, at an OPP town hall in Minden Oct. 29. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

Audience participant Krystal Shannon said police follow-up on investigations is a problem.

She talked about a recent incident in Gooderham involving some "sketchy" people who appeared to have stolen items in a vehicle and were canvassing a property. She said police were called, and did come, but the complainants were never interviewed and OPP never contacted them afterwards.

McClure said while arrests were made in connection with the incident, Shannon's point about follow up was "fair" and "valid." She noted police often cannot tell community members much during investigations.

The chief was asked about a concern about the number of cruisers during a shift in Haliburton County and a perception there are not enough.

She said, "they're the same concerns across the province. There is never enough. Unfortunately, it comes with a cost and we do what we can with our resources as best as we can based on so many factors."

She noted they always have back-up across the region, and those officers may not be as visible to the general public as they use unmarked cars and wear civilian clothing.

Officer Isaac Austin spoke to property crime, saying it is "a huge issue in this community because it is so relatable." He said everybody had come to the cottage to find a broken window, a stolen piece of equipment, or siphoned or stolen gas. However, he said the community street crime unit is very active in the Highlands.

He had some prevention tips, such as writing down VIN numbers, or putting your driver's licence number on property, so it can be identified and returned. He told people to keep shed and garage doors locked, and have security cameras.

Minden Hills coun. Pam Sayne asked, "what is driving crime here? Addictions, poverty, crime syndicates? I think we have to get to that in order to turn things around."

More than 40 years of expertise

Gary Burtch, of G.J. Burtch Construction Ent. Ltd. of Haliburton, received a lifetime achievement award at the Ontario Home Builders' Association conference in Blue Mountain in late September. His son, Andrew Burtch, is a 2025-26 OHBA director. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

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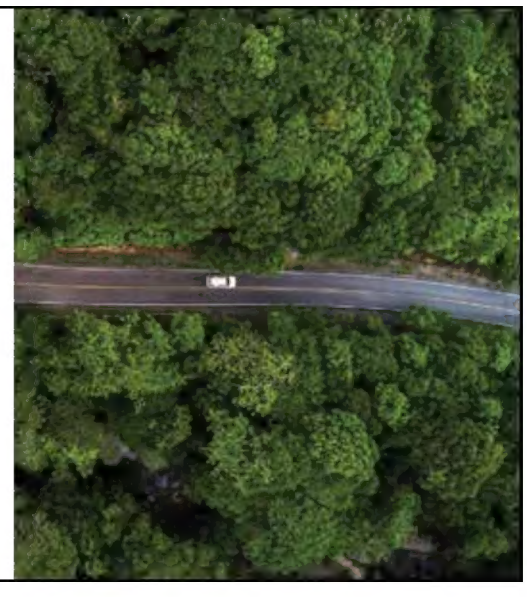

Highlander news

Legion flying flags of military heroes

By Mike Baker

This is a banner year for the Haliburton Legion.

This week, flags commemorating 24 of the community's military veterans were hung in the downtown – part of an effort to bring more awareness to and honour the sacrifices many have made defending their country.

The project was spearheaded by legion president Mike Waller, who started looking into getting banners made last fall.

"I'm surprised it's taken Haliburton so long to do this," Waller said. "I think it's important that we honour the people who came before us, show respect for what they had to do. If they didn't give what they did, we wouldn't be here today."

Waller said he approached Dysart et al township and the Haliburton BIA earlier this year and was given the green light to proceed. There are 12 banners, with a service member honoured on either side. The bulk are men and women who served during the First and Second World Wars, with some from the more-recent excursions in Afghanistan.

The banners state the veteran's name, which war they participated in, the year they were born and the year they passed. Waller noted only one of those included is still living.

This is the second display to debut in Haliburton County recently after Irondale Church had banners made up for its 'Service, Courage and Sacrifice' series in 2023. The church honoured 40 people associated with the hamlet who served Canada in various aspects of war.

Dysart et al coun. Pat Casey and Kemhaul Casey pose with two of the veterans' banners that were erected in downtown Haliburton this week. *Photo submitted.*

Waller said he wanted to bring something similar to Haliburton after hearing about the Irondale display and seeing new ones released in Bancroft and Apsley. He said there was an effort about eight years ago to bring banners to Haliburton, but it didn't get off the ground.

Each side of a banner costs $150, which is covered by the families of those featured. Waller said he opened nominations in the spring, with all those that applied making the cut.

He said Gerald Sharp, who installed the pieces, and Dysart et al coun. Pat Casey, who assisted with research, were key contributors to the campaign.

Casey has three family members featured, his grandparents Earl Casey, Holly Sisson and Sylvia Sisson. He told *The Highlander* that he believes more needs to be done to remember those who paved the way for future generations.

"I think Remembrance Day activities have started to wane over the years… I thought this was a great way to commemorate the bravery our forefathers had in putting their lives on the line for freedom," Casey said. "The freedoms we have today didn't come by chance. These people had to work and sacrifice for it."

Casey and Barry Hart will be at the Haliburton Legion Nov. 10 and Hal High Nov. 11 to tell tales about their grandfathers, who were both tail gunners during the Second World War. Presentations at the legion are open to the public, running at 1:30 and 6:30 p.m.

Waller said he's hoping to grow the banner collection, saying anyone with a military background can be included.

"As long as they were in the service, that's all that matters," Waller said. "Next year, I'm hoping to get them up in mid-October, that way they can be up for a month and people can really take notice."

Anyone interested can contact Waller at 705-854-9237.

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Highlander news

Dog shelters pitch plan to Minden Hills

By Lisa Gervais

Minden Hills council, at its Oct. 30 meeting, was asked to work with Paws at Killara Station and Snowflake Meadows for dog control services in the township.

Owner of Paws at Killara Station, Susan Peel, made the pitch. She noted they provide a similar service to the Township of Algonquin Highlands.

"Minden Hills faces a growing challenge in managing stray, lost, and abandoned dogs. With the township's population increasing, so too are reports of animals found wandering, neglected, or surrendered," Peel said.

She added that now the burden of care falls almost entirely on volunteers and rescues without formal municipal support. In 2024, Snowflake Meadows spent more than $107,000 on veterinary care for more than 200 animals across Ontario, including about 60 from Minden Hills, she added.

Peel said their proposal would provide the township with "a clear, low-cost, and sustainable solution."

Essentially, Paws would serve as the official pound intake, working to reunite lost dogs with owners through social media and microchip scanning. Snowflake Meadows would provide spay and neuter, veterinary care, and adoption services for unclaimed or surrendered dogs. Peel said both are insured, reducing the township's liability and administration would be minimized, as the rescues would operate a lost and found dog portal which the township could link to.

Ethan Biback gets a kiss from Byron, an Irish wolf hound, during an event at Snowflake Meadows. *File.*

She asked council to approve service agreements, educate the community about the process for reporting and handling lost and stray dogs, and provide bylaw support when needed.

Peel said at the moment, there is no clear reporting process for residents or staff; the OPP and vets redirect cases inconsistently; volunteers and rescues are covering the costs; and the township carries risk and responsibility without a structured solution.

Peel estimated a maximum annual budget of $25,000, basing that on $300 per month to Paws, and $380 per unclaimed dog for Snowflake.

"Many Ontario municipalities already rely on pound–rescue partnerships rather than operating their own facilities," she said.

Deputy mayor Lisa Schell said it's been 10 years since Peel came to council with a similar pitch in 2015 and the problem has only gotten worse. Coun. Pam Sayne said she and Coun. Shirley Johannessen met with Paws and Snowflake Meadows as it was an "ongoing and growing problem. We need to get something going."

Coun. Ivan Ingram said it was a great idea, but felt the township needed to reintroduce dog tags. Peel said that could work with lifetime licensing and mandatory microchipping in the township's dog bylaw.

Mayor Bob Carter said he'd like to know the status of the township's existing bylaw before proceeding. He wanted clarity on the nature of the role between the municipality and Paws and Snowflake and how that looks in other townships.

Council has asked for a staff report and will discuss the pitch further then.

MINDEN HILLS NEWS

Council supports Lochlin Hall rebuild

Minden Hills councillors, Oct. 30, voted to hire Quantum Passivhaus to build a new Lochlin Community Centre.

The pre-fabricated structure will cost $649,000 plus HST. The township plans to take out a loan for the work.

The building is just under 1,800-sq. ft. and will have an 850 sq. ft. conference room, two restrooms, a kitchen, storage room, aluminum siding and roof, and triple pane windows.

The work of demolishing the existing hall was given to Garbutt Disposal, for $54,900 plus HST. This will come from the property reserve account.

Coun. Pam Sayne said, "I'm totally in support of going ahead with this."

Coun. Tammy McKelvey also supported moving forward with the project, saying the price was less than they had anticipated. Deputy mayor Lisa Schell did not vote as she had a conflict of interest, but councillors Bob Sisson, Ivan Igram, and Shirley Johannessen were all in support.

Mayor Bob Carter was not. "I have a real problem with $700,000 for this project… in looking at our previous presentation on the asset management plan, and looking at how our budgets are shaping up in terms of costs for things like OPP, and not knowing what funding we are getting from the provincial government. We are going to have serious challenges this year on budgets. As much as it's a nice to have, I'm not really certain that the number of people it serves is something that the Township of Minden Hills can afford right now."

However, McKelvey said Gelert and Lochlin each had a community hall in the past. "Gelert was taken away. Lochlin's hall was basically abandoned by the township. It just didn't get maintained properly during COVID. I feel we have an obligation to provide a small community hall in Lochlin. I do feel we need to see this through."

She stressed she wanted assurances that if the new build did not proceed for some reason, such as veto powers under the Strong Mayors Act, the old hall would not be demolished.

Council voted 6-1 in favour of demolishing and rebuilding.

(Minden Hills news compiled by Lisa Gervais).

Highlander news

A MESSAGE FROM

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Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

HIGHLANDS EAST NEWS

Mayor Dave Burton said they would deal with the potential cost of a new municipal office building "in due time." *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

Drawings for new municipal office

Consultant Bell + Associates presented Highlands East council, on Oct. 14, with a diagram of a potential new administration building.

The drawings featured the exterior and interior of a proposed new build. One feature is a council chamber, replete with 36 seats for the public.

Coun. Angela Lewis asked about the distance from the gallery to councillors and was told 10-feet. Deputy mayor Cec Ryall felt that was too close for security reasons, and Bell said they could add a railing to separate the public from councillors and staff.

The new space would also have 27 offices.

CAO Brittany McCaw recalled how they had a summer student last year sharing space with two other staffers, using a folding table. "It will be nice to have the extra bit of growth," she said.

Ryall then asked for a cost estimate.

Bell said he could provide high-level, preliminary figures only, ranging from $400 per sq. ft. to $650 per sq. ft., with septic and well. He estimated between $5.4 million and $8.75 million.

Ryall said he assumed that did not include furnishings, which he calculated at another $250,000 to $500,000. Bell said it did not.

Council voted to approve the concept only, with Ryall ensuring they would "have a much more thorough discussion before we spend close to $9 million."

McCaw said staff would come back to council, "before we start moving into anything with dollars."

Ryall said they were initially told a new municipal office would cost $2-4 million, and were now being told $6-9 million. He said the big question will be, "where is the money coming from?"

Mayor Dave Burton said, "we will deal with that in due time."

Coun. Angela Lewis asked about possible grants, and McCaw said they would be looking into that, but would have to have a shovel-ready plan in place prior to applying.

Ice storm costs

While not as heavily affected as other areas of the County, Highlands East incurred unbudgeted costs related to its response and clean-up efforts during the spring ice storm.

McCaw said it included volunteer firefighter wages related to the warming centre ($1,141.36), equipment usage of a chipper ($4,070.40) and renting an excavator ($11,320).

The province launched the Municipal Ice Storm Assistance (MISA) program, in response to the 2025 ice storm. It provides one-time support to eligible municipalities for incremental costs related to the storm. Incremental costs are over and above the regular municipal budget.

Eligible costs under the program are operating and capital costs directly linked to the ice storm, such as those for emergency response, debris removal and infrastructure repairs.

Under MISA, municipalities can apply for reimbursement for eligible costs up to three per cent of the levy. The province will reimburse 75 per cent and the municipality will cover 25 per cent.

With council's approval, the formal MISA grant application was submitted to the province ahead of the Oct. 31 program deadline.

New Zamboni

Council approved the purchase of a replacement ice re-surfacer from Zamboni, the sole supplier, for $56,260 plus delivery and HST. Council had set aside $55,000 in its 2025 budget. Overbudget money will come from reserves.

McCaw said it's for the Keith Tallman Memorial Arena and Zamboni is the only company that has one for the arena's size.

She said the existing ice re-surfacer was no longer operational as of Oct. 9 and the new unit was expected the week of Oct 13.

Clearing bylaw complaints

With some bylaw complaints dating back seven years, Ryall commented, "we've kind of beat this thing up so many times, I'm kind of tired of beating it up, and that's in relation to the length of time it takes us to clear a lot of our stuff."

He said they had files dating back to 2018, and were now getting others accumulating from 2020 and 2021.

Ryall said they had talked about the possibility of alternatives.

"The whole point is, you can't really expect the bylaw enforcement guys to do a whole lot if they don't have anything to work with; if there's no teeth in anything they can do."

He said the township seemed to be controlling short-term rental issues, with fines, and recognizing "there is more than just waiting and hoping and praying that someone is going to clean something up." He acknowledged litigation is not an easy route.

He requested a report for the November or December council meetings, with options "to mediate this and bring it down to something that is tangible."

He wondered about statues of limitations on some files.

Staffer Mike Clark said he had been reviewing old files, and some were no longer relevant, as for example, some properties had changed hands. However, he said he was happy to prepare a report.

Ryall said it was not a criticism of bylaw enforcement officers. He said he felt they were doing the best they could with limitations.

(*Highlands East news compiled by Lisa Gervais.*)

Highlander news

Provincial minister visits wellness hub

By Mike Baker

Point in Time executive director Marg Cox welcomed Ontario's associate minister of mental health and addictions, Vijay Thanigasalam, for a tour of the Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub Oct. 23, saying the space has served as a refuge for hundreds of struggling teenagers since its opening in 2021.

The facility, operated by Point in Time, was one of 10 youth hubs funded through a provincial pilot four years ago. Since then, demand has spiked – Cox shared how the centre, located on Dysart Avenue, has gone from seeing 139 youth in 2020-21 to 168 in 2024-25. Service visits have climbed from 440 to 879, with enrollment in skills and wellbeing activities quadrupling, from 593 to 2,292.

"We were one of the first out of the gate and have been operating with only one minor cost of living increase. We know what inflation has been doing… we're really interested in sustaining the model of youth hubs and being able to stabilize the operation of existing hubs," Cox said.

The hub offers mental health, substance use and general supports to youth aged 12 to 25, Cox said.

After recently purchasing a four-acre property on County Road 21 in Haliburton, Cox said the organization is trying to gather support for a new building. She asked Thanigasalam if the Ontario government would support the project.

Point in Time executive director Marg Cox tells Vijay Thanigasalam, Ontario's associate minister of mental health and addictions, about the demand for services at the Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

"We're seeing double the number of youths from when we started – and we know there's lots more that would like to utilize the hub, but we don't have any other space," Cox said. "We're trying to create a community hub in Haliburton. We want to provide integrated services for infants right up to the age of 25."

Thanigasalam was non-committal at the meeting but acknowledged there is money available to support program expansion for mental health and addictions services.

Pam Weiss, a former board member at the youth hub, said the facility – open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday and noon to 8 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday – has been lifesaving for some local youth – including their own child.

"I have a gender-diverse child who has been diagnosed with anxiety, depression, bipolar, borderline personality, ADHD, and OCD. We started with Point in Time when they were eight years old and they're 25 now," Weiss said. "In April, they will turn 26 and age out of the youth hub, which has been like a second home these past four years."

Weiss said her child utilized the space for employment services, counselling, to see the nurse practitioner, and to learn how to cook. It was one of the only places in the community they felt comfortable socializing, Weiss added.

"Without the hub, I'm not sure what we would have done… there would be a lot of kids that would have been lost, including mine," Weiss said.

Cox said the current plan is to sever the new four-acre property, a process she expects will take about a year. She's hired an architect and surveyor to assist with design and will soon be commissioning a traffic brief.

"All of those will help us determine what it is we want to build and where. Then we'll be reaching out to the province, foundations and the community to raise the money to build the thing," Cox said.

Thanigasalam declined an in-person interview following the visit, while his office did not respond to follow-up questions as of press time.

COUNTY OF HALIBURTON NEWS

Contract for office renovations

County council, at its Oct. 22 meeting, awarded the contract for the Land Registry Office and Administration building renovations.

Perfectly Built Inc. is getting the job. They bid $2,002,105.61 including nonrecoverable tax. The County has budgeted $2,435,155 for the project.

On Aug. 27, a majority of councillors approved the work.

Director of public works Syl Cloutier, said "the preferred option is to renovate both 11 and 12 Newcastle St. The scope of work for both buildings includes: accessibility (AODA) compliance, building structure and space upgrades, regulatory standards, mechanical and electrical system upgrades and safety enhancements."

Coun. Bob Carter said they were a new contractor for the County and he wondered if staff had checked their references. Director of corporate services, Andrea Robinson, and Cloutier, said it was part of the tendering process and Perfectly Built Inc. was fully compliant.

Coun. Walt McKechnie asked if there were no local tenders because of the requirement for a bond. However, CAO Gary Dyke said "we've received no indication that any provisions, or our requirements to bid, were a restriction to anybody bidding."

Coun. Murray Fearrey asked where the County had advertised, saying local companies had told him they did not see it anywhere. Robinson said they used the bids & tenders website, but not local newspapers. Robinson added when they switched to bids & tenders, local contractors were informed.

(*County of Haliburton news compiled by Lisa Gervais*)

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MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

• *Haycock: One Family's Canvas of Canada* will be on display in the Agnes Jamieson Gallery until Saturday, November 15.

• Free screening of *Rosies of the North* (1999) on Thursday, November 6 at 1:00 p.m. This NFB documentary tells the story of the thousands of women from Thunder Bay and the Prairies who stepped into Canada's wartime workforce during the Second World War. The film is presented in collaboration with the HCPL.

• Join the UFO's (UnFinished Objects Craft Group) in the Welch Room on Friday, November 7 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. All are welcome!

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

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COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

• November 13 – Regular Council Meeting
• November 27 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

WINTER PARKING

From Nov 1st to Apr 30th overnight parking is illegal from midnight to 8:00 AM on township roadways and parking lots. Parking in the turning circle of a cul-de-sac is prohibited during all hours. Vehicles parked in areas that interferes with snow removal will be towed away and/or ticketed at the owner's expense.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Take notice that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills will be holding a Public Meeting on Thursday, November 13, 2025, during its Regular Council Meeting regarding proposed changes to the Township's Fees and Charges By-law.

Proposed changes include:

• Schedule B Administration – Finance
• Schedule C Fire – Housekeeping changes
• Schedule D Cultural Centre Programs & Facilities
• Schedule E Roads Department Fees
• Schedule F Planning Department Fees
• Schedule G Cemetery – Housekeeping changes
• Schedule H Community Services Programs & Facilities
• Schedule I Environmental – Water & Sewer, Landfill
• Schedule J Community Services Advertising

The meeting will commence at 9:00 AM in the Council Chambers located at 7 Milne Street, Minden ON. Members of the public wishing to make comment may attend in person or join electronically for the public meeting regarding the proposed changes. Registration is required for electronic participants.

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Editorial opinion

TheHighlander
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OUR MISSION

To tell the story of Haliburton County each week.

To be a source of information and inspiration through stories and ideas.

To report on issues, people and events important to the community.

To reflect and promote pride in the culture, people and landscape of The Highlands.

To encourage Highlanders to believe in themselves, in our community, and in their power to make our place in the world better every day.

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Support local

By Lisa Gervais

There were as many cops as councillors and members of the public at last week's OPP town hall in Minden.

In fact, there were five members of the public, one the partner of a councillor, three councillors and me; the lone representative of the local media.

The County of Haliburton had posted a notice about the meeting that afternoon, which is the only reason that nine people showed up.

The OPP said it had first advertised the meeting on X, formerly Twitter, way back on Oct. 10; for the Oct. 29 event. Nineteen days out was probably a bit early.

To be fair, they did send a notice to *The Highlander* on Oct. 10. We requested an interview with detachment commander Deb McClure so we could do an advance story to try to drum up some interest. The OPP declined as McClure had commander meetings in Orillia. We feel it was a badly missed opportunity on the OPP's part. If someone offers you ink, and an opportunity to reach thousands of Highlanders, you should take them up on the offer.

The OPP, as many organizations and institutions are doing in this County, are moving towards their own websites and social media pages to get their messaging out. Their use of websites doesn't irk me as much as their growing dependence on social media. Basically, these organizations are using U.S.- owned resources, such as X and Facebook, to get their information out. They are attracted because it can be free, instant, with sort of trackable results, unlimited posts, and potentially higher engagement and frequency.

However, there are many cons – particularly in an area where not everyone uses social media. I find these posts float in all the other junk that is on social media feeds. I miss a lot of stuff posted by these organizations because it gets lost in the feed. People not following these sites are never going to see the information.

I'm in the news business, and I missed the X announcement on the town hall. How many others did? I guess the other people, minus the nine, who showed up last week.

I'll spare you my usual rant about how social media has created chaos in this community by allowing false information to circulate.

Now, a savvy reader may be thinking I'm appealing to institutions and organizations to work with local media better. I am. I encourage them to shop local: take out inexpensive ads to let the community know what is going on. At the very least, send us a heads-up about events. And if you are given an opportunity to be interviewed, make it happen.

I'm disappointed in our community for allowing the message to be highjacked by unscrupulous U.S. companies rather than supporting local media and local jobs.

Paying our respects

By Mike Baker

I'm quite proud of this week's edition of *The Highlander.*

With Remembrance Day just a few days away, we decided to shine as big a spotlight as we could on our military veterans. Packed inside the pages of this week's newspaper are stories of mystery and intrigue, heartbreak and terror – key themes, I'm sure, for the soldiers who fought for us in the First and Second World Wars and all the incursions since.

It's important, too, that we recognize the little pieces of hope sprinkled throughout. Despite some of these stories recounting the worst days of people's lives, there's an underlying current of positivity throughout.

Take 97-year-old Lainey Hunting, for example. She grew up in Eindhoven, Holland and lived through four years of German occupation – witnessing enough horrors for 1,000 lifetimes.

I went through a rollercoaster of emotions while she shared her story one Thursday afternoon. Twelve when Nazi forces took over her home nation in May 1940, Hunting said her morning walks to school were replaced with frequent trips to her nearest bomb shelter, where she hid with her parents, six siblings and hundreds of others.

She remembered how workers from a nearby Philips Electronics factory were executed after refusing to make bullets for the Axis forces. How she would sneak out after curfew, dodging German soldiers en route to a neighbouring farm, trying to find any leftover scraps to feed her family.

Though everyone was terrified, Hunting said she and those she knew made it through by sticking together. Even at their lowest ebb, people bought into that sense of community usually required to overcome, or at least withstand, widespread trauma.

Then there's the intriguing case of Arnold McCaig, an air gunner warrant officer class 1 with the 148th Squadron. After flying in over 50 missions, he went missing after the Halifax bomber he was in was shot down in Albania on June 28, 1944.

Military officials sent a series of letters to Arnold's parents and wife – first confirming he was missing in action, then saying he had been found alive and was safe, before a third letter indicated he might have been one of three bodies Albanian forces reportedly observed at the crash site.

A few years later, Arnold's wife – who would later marry one of his brothers, Keith – received a letter written in Italian. She reportedly took the note to a translator, who broke down into tears, ripped the letter up and didn't reveal its details. All these years later, Arnold's nephew Rob McCaig – whose mother is Arnold's widow, Nina McCaig – is still trying to figure out what happened to him.

Our cover story focuses on the work of genealogist Adele Espina, who is trying to get headstone markers installed on the unmarked graves of about 50 Haliburton County military veterans. A very worthwhile project, in our opinion.

And then there's Haliburton Legion president Mike Waller, who for the past year has been drumming up interest for a series of commemorative banners that, as of this past Monday, now adorn our downtown.

Twenty-four veterans are part of this first batch, recognizing those who served in the First and Second World Wars and the Afghanistan War.

There are three ceremonies planned in Haliburton County next Tuesday – at the cenotaphs in downtown Minden, Haliburton and Wilberforce. We encourage everyone to attend and pay their respects to the people who laid down their lives so that we could live a better one.

If you can't make it to any of the 11 a.m. services on Nov. 11, the Haliburton Legion is hosting two afternoon presentations Nov. 10, featuring County residents Barry Hart and Pat Casey who will share stories about their grandparents' tribulations as tail gunners. They'll be speaking at 1:30 and 6:30 p.m., with a screening of the movie *The Great Escapers* right after.

The Haliburton Legion has also kicked off its annual poppy fund – so even if you can't make any of next week's commemorations, donate a few bucks and pay your respects by pinning a poppy to your chest. It's the least we can do to honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

THEHIGHLANDER.CA

Editorial opinion

NATURE'S CALLING

Deer season a tradition

By Toni Cooper

With November's arrival comes that familiar chill in the air – the sign that deer hunting season has begun. For many families, this time of year is about more than just hunting. It's a season of tradition, connection, and time spent in the great outdoors. Although not everyone agrees with hunting, and that's entirely their choice, for others, it's a way of life passed down through generations.

Not all hunters head into the woods with the mindset of simply bagging a deer. For many, it's about much more than that. It's about filling the freezer with meat to feed their families through the winter. Its's about seeing old friends they haven't caught up with in months, maybe even years, as they gather at deer camp. It's about sitting quietly in nature, breathing in the crisp morning air, and appreciating the stillness that life so rarely offers anymore.

Deer season has always been a time of excitement and togetherness in our family. The early mornings, the sound of coffee brewing before dawn, the laughter echoing through camp, and the storytelling that stretches late after dinner – these moments are what make the season special. The memories created during those days are ones that last a lifetime.

But this year, deer season will feel different. This will be our first without my dad, who passed away in May. He was the heart of our hunting traditions – the steady voice reminding us to be patient, the one who taught us respect for nature and for the animals we hunt. Losing him has left a hole that no season, no harvest, could ever fill. He was the first phone call I would make to tell him how my hunts went. So, this year that first phone call will be to my mom. Yet in many ways, being out there in the woods will bring him close again. I know that when the sun rises over the treeline and the frost glitters on the ground, we will feel his presence.

Hunting, for us, has never been about trophies. It's been about family. My mom and dad raised us to understand that hunting was part of who we are – not as sport, but as a way to live responsibly and with gratitude. They taught us that if you take from nature, you give thanks and use everything with respect.

There's one undeniable benefit to hunting that often gets overlooked: conservation – responsible hunting helps manage healthy wildlife populations. When deer numbers grow too high, it can lead to starvation, disease, and damage to local ecosystems. Hunters play an important role in maintaining balance in nature – something that benefits both the animals and environment we all share.

So as this new season begins, I'll head into the woods with a mix of sadness and gratitude. Sadness for what's missing, but gratitude for the traditions and values my dad passed down. For those of us raised in hunting families, deer season isn't just about what we get – it's what we remember, what we share, and what we carry forward.

Good luck to all hunters, and a special good luck to the Blue Lake Camp.

PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

Emma Couette lives in Minden and submitted this photo of a sunset she took.

We want to hear from you

Send us your opinion on any and all things related to living here in the County

Contact: editor@thehighlander.ca

Debbie Irvine of Minden Hills sent in this photograph entitled 'the gawky groundhog.'

Remembrance Day

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Rob McCaig has been investigating the mystery of his uncle, Arnold McCaig's disappearance during the Second World War. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

McCaig Second World War story shrouded in mystery

By Mike Baker

The lead up to Remembrance Day is always a time of reflection for Haliburton's Rob McCaig, who has compiled a running history of his family's extensive involvement in the Second World War – including a mystery that remains unsolved today.

His parents, Keith and Nina McCaig, were each involved in the effort – the former an airframe mechanic and tail gunner with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and the latter a cook with the Women's Royal Naval Service.

Four uncles also enlisted – Clifford, the eldest, was the first to join in 1940, signing up for the army and later becoming a member of the special forces team 'The Devil's Brigade'. Wally, Keith's twin, and Arnold joined the air force in October 1941, while Norman joined the army in 1942.

"The McCaigs were a big family, eight boys and one daughter – they had a farm in St. Louis de Gonzague, Quebec," McCaig said. "Half of them went overseas to fight and the rest stayed back to run the farm… they had a lot of adventures, the McCaig boys."

Clifford was 23 when he enlisted, Arnold was 22, while Keith, Wally and Norman were 19. Nina was a teenager, too, though the furthest she traveled was Halifax, where she was stationed on the HMS Cornwallis until 1946.

All but one of the McCaigs made it home following the war – sadly, Arnold never returned from what McCaig described as a top-secret mission to Albania on June 28, 1944. The details of that operation remain shrouded in mystery, he said.

An eight-man crew left a British Royal Air Force airbase in Brindisi, Italy in a Handley Page Halifax bomber shortly before midnight. They were carrying out an unknown mission 10 miles north of Lake Ohridsko in Albania when their plane was shot down by enemy forces. Albania, though considered partisan in the war effort, was largely occupied by German forces.

"The interesting thing is, the Halifax usually carried a seven-man crew, but this time they had eight people. I have all the letters that were sent to my grandparents and mom, who was first married to my Uncle Arnold in September 1942. She then married my dad six years later," Rob said. "The extra crew member was someone from the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia."

Military records state five members of the crew bailed from the plane before it crashed. Albanian forces stated there was no sign of Arnold during the bailout, though he could have been one of the first to jump. There were three bodies found at the crash site.

Rob said initial letters home in early July said Arnold was missing in action. A second letter arrived later in the month,

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Remembrance Day

Arnold McCaig photographed during the Second World War. *Submitted.*

saying Arnold had been found alive and was temporarily safe, but that his whereabouts could not be disclosed. The letter also advised that until further information is received, Arnold would remain classified as missing.

On Dec. 28, a third letter was received stating the other crew members who made it back reported seeing three bodies at the crash site – though the military has never confirmed that Arnold was one of them.

"Arnold is still unaccounted for and any further information of his whereabouts will be forwarded," the letter stated.

McCaig said key details from the mission – when the plane started taking fire, how many times it was hit, and the order of men bailing from the plane – were included in Arnold's personal file.

"How did he write up and submit this report if he died in that crash?" McCaig ponders. "I believe Arnold did die, but we have no idea when, where or how. There's no documented proof whatsoever."

Another letter was received in May 1945, saying Arnold was presumed dead. Seven years later, in 1952, the McCaigs received a final letter generally confirming Arnold's death but said "due to circumstances outside British control" it wasn't possible to send search teams into Albania to locate his grave.

Arnold was an air gunner warrant office class 1 with the 148 squadron who, as of June 27, 1944 was confirmed to have flown in over 50 missions.

McCaig said the ordeal hit his mother, Nina, hard. The McCaigs took her in after she left the Navy. Years later, once confirmation of Arnold's death came through, romance blossomed between Nina and Keith. They were married in 1948.

A year later, Nina received a letter addressed to her but written in Italian. Rob said she took the note to a translator, who burst into tears and tore the letter to pieces.

"My mom never knew the contents of that letter throughout the remaining years of her life," McCaig said. "Every Remembrance Day was really tough on her. She wanted to go overseas to look for Arnold.

"They were absolutely in love. They wrote over 100 letters back and forth to one another. He wrote her the day before his final mission," he added.

McCaig hasn't given up hope of finding out what happened to his uncle – efforts are ongoing today to locate downed Halifax bombers that have been lost or buried over time. A trip to Albania, to try and source some answers himself, is on his bucket list.

So too is a trip to Malta – an island nation in the Mediterranean Sea. There, Arnold's name is inscribed on a memorial to all those who served in the RAF and RCAF but didn't make it home.

With this year marking the 80th anniversary of the war's conclusion, McCaig feels it's more important than ever to keep these sorts of stories alive.

"There isn't a family that the war didn't impact, but the McCaigs had a lot of involvement. It's important to recognize the sacrifices – they were all so young when they enlisted, and they didn't make a ton of money. The average soldier made $850 a year, if you were an officer or special services, you were lucky to get $2,000.

"My family enlisted because they believed in our country. Unfortunately, in the case of my Uncle Arnold, that belief cost him his life," McCaig said.

Of the approximate 1.6 million Canadians who served in the Second World War, 44,090 died, according to online service files through Library and Archives Canada. Lest we forget.

Remembrance Day

Dutch woman honours Canada's heroes

By Mike Baker

As a young girl, Minden's Lainey Hunting remembers sneaking out of her home at night – not for fun, or to socialize with friends, but for survival.

The 97-year-old grew up in Eindhoven in the Netherlands – a city ransacked and occupied by German forces for the bulk of the Second World War. Hunting was 12 when her hometown was taken over.

"I remember waking up one night because there was a lot of noise. There were so many cars out on the road heading down the street. Not many people had a car back then, but the ones that did left Holland because they knew the Germans were coming," Hunting said.

It was May 1940 and the Axis powers, led by Nazi Germany, invaded the Netherlands as part of a larger plan to conquer France and secure important airfields and ports for future use against the U.K. Hunting said the occupation was swift.

Soldiers quickly took over a Philips Electronics factory in the city, using it as a homebase for its operations. They implemented an 8 p.m. curfew for residents, took what they wanted from people's homes and seized all existing food supplies.

Hunting said she and her family – mom, dad and six siblings – survived on scraps. Workers at the Philips factory served soup once a week, but other than that it was up to the family to scrounge up whatever food they could find.

97-year-old Lainey Hunting was 12 when German soldiers occupied her hometown in the Netherlands. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

"I'd sneak out after curfew to go to the potato fields. Sometimes there would be little ones left and I'd be so excited taking them home," Hunting said. "It was a risk… if a German soldier had spotted me, I'd have been shot for sure."

Hunting said she was terrified of the Nazis. After the occupation, Philips workers initially refused to make bullets and weapons for the Axis – so German soldiers took 10 each day and executed them until the workers relented. She also recalls

Remembrance Day is a time to

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we observe two minutes of silence to show gratitude
for the courage and sacrifice of our veterans.

For more ways to remember or to learn more, visit
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Legion

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Remembrance Day

observing the Germans rounding up Jews and sending them to concentration camps.

One of her best friends at the time, a Jewish girl from Austria, attempted to flee the city with her family, though Hunting doesn't know if they made it. "I never saw her again," she said.

There was no school. Instead, Hunting said the days were filled with frequent visits to the nearby bomb shelter. The sirens would ring multiple times per day, she said, signalling bombers in the sky.

"There was a woman who told jokes to try and keep all the kids quiet and distracted. But we'd always hear the whistles, which meant the bombs were coming. Then we started to pray," Hunting said.

> *"We'd always hear the whistles, which meant the bombs were coming. Then we started to pray."*
>
> ***Lainey Hunting***

Eindhoven was completely levelled by the time the Allied forces re-took it in September 1944 – it was the first Dutch city to be liberated. Hunting, by then 17, remembers seeing the tanks rolling in, carrying waving soldiers. The red maple leaf stitched to their uniforms coming across like a giant beacon of hope.

"I remember everyone climbing on the tanks and singing – people were so happy," she said.

It was short-lived – a few days later, the Germans returned with bombs of their own. Thousands died, Hunting said.

"I'll always remember the Canadians covering as many bodies as they could. So much that seemed like nothing much, or no big deal, they did it. That meant so much to the people of Holland," Hunting said.

Hunting married in her early 20s and, with the country still rebuilding, opted to move to Canada – first to New Brunswick, then Bronte, a fishing village near Oakville. She and her husband, Harry, came to Haliburton County in 1967, purchasing the former Big Bob Lake Lodge with their friends, William and Nellie Brouwers.

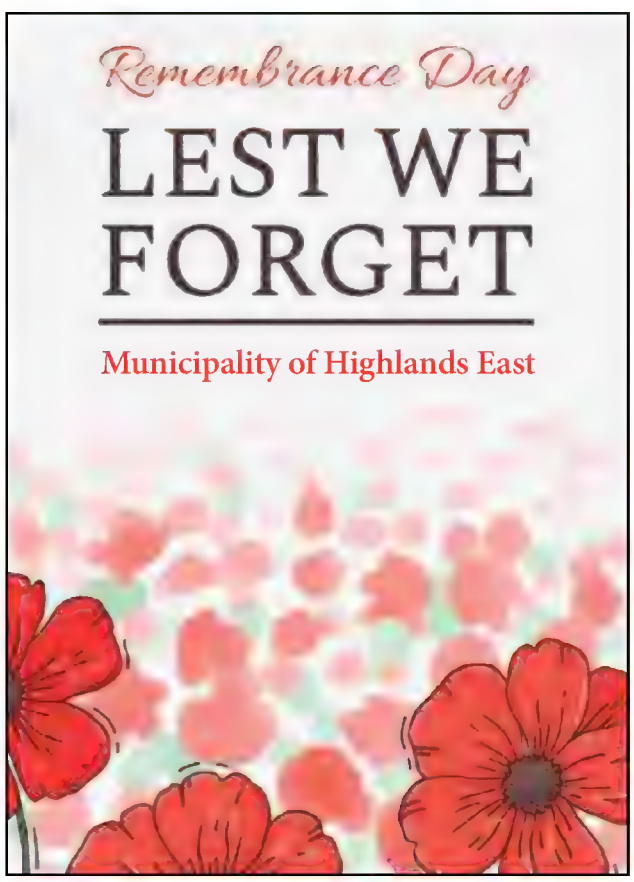
As Remembrance Day approaches, Hunting said she'll always be thankful of the Canadian soldiers who freed her from German captivity.

"They helped us out when nobody else could… in schools in Holland today, kids learn a lot about Canada and the liberation. There's a big connection between the two countries," Hunting said. "The Canadians saved us."

We will remember them

Dysart et al mayor Murray Fearrey helped kick off the Haliburton Legion's annual poppy campaign Oct. 31, making the first donation to legion president Mike Waller. Each year, the legion uses money raised through poppy sales to put on a veterans' dinner for those who served and their families, with former military personnel having their ticket covered. This year's event takes place Nov. 9, with doors opening at the legion at 4 p.m. and dinner served at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are $30 per person. Contact Waller at 705-854-9237 to purchase your ticket. *(Mike Baker)*

Above: Haliburton Legion president Mike Waller pins a poppy to Dysart et al mayor Murray Fearrey's lapel last Friday, kicking off the legion's annual poppy campaign. *Photo submitted.*



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Highlander agriculture

Food for thought at Harvest Hali forum

By Mike Baker

Six years after challenging the community to form ideas for developing and maintaining a sustainable food system in the Highlands non-profit group, Harvest Haliburton, is preparing to provide some answers and possible solutions this week.

The volunteer organization is hosting a food forum at Pinestone Resort Nov. 7, gathering a collection of County-based growers, experts from the food industry, service agencies and tourism operators together to talk about methods that have worked within our borders and beyond.

Barrie Martin, Harvest Haliburton's co-chair, said this is a follow-up to a 2019 event and provides "an opportunity to bring everyone up to speed on food issues and to learn from contrasting viewpoints."

Dr. Sara Epp, a professor at the University of Guelph, will serve as the keynote speaker. Jean Tyler, a longtime County farmer and coordinator of the forum, said Epp's talk will unpack all aspects of agricultural sustainability in rural communities like Haliburton County.

Following Epp will be an hour-long talk on growing and homesteading, featuring Haliburton Farmers' Association president Minna Schleifenbaum, Katie Metauro of Waverly Brook Farm and Godfrey Tyler from Rising Sun Gardens.

The afternoon will feature a discussion with local sellers, with vendors from the Haliburton County Farmers Market joining Abbey Gardens executive director Angela Kruger, Haliburton Foodland owner Brad Park and Terri Mathews-Carl, owner of Rhubarb and Juna restaurants, on a locally-themed forum.

Haliburton County farmer Jean Tyler said people can learn how to grow their own food at a Nov. 7 food forum at Pinestone Resort. *Submitted.*

Attendees will also hear from those who help people suffering with food insecurity daily – Gena Robertson from SIRCH Community Services, Tina Jackson from Central Food Network, Brian Nash from the Rotary Harvest Program and Nell Thomas from the Food Alliance for Haliburton County.

Tyler said she hopes the event will help to spark fresh conversations about food sustainability.

"The intent of the first one we did was to keep going, but COVID really knocked the wind out of our sails. We do need to regroup, to be the organization that gives answers and offers hope to people," Tyler said. "We need to rethink what we're doing as a community. How can we support one another to improve food security and local food production."

Tyler said she and her husband have been growing food for 31 years and boast forestry, maple syrup, vegetable and beef operations at their farm in Haliburton. She said being a farmer is a lifestyle choice – and one she's eager to imprint on the next generation.

"Succession planning is very important – it's not easy to farm, there's a lot of techniques that we know that, if young people are willing to come out and be on the farm with us, they can learn about," she said.

While there was a surge in people establishing homesteads throughout the County during the pandemic and the years that followed, Tyler said those operations are usually single-minded – growing enough to sustain their own household, rather than growing food for the wider community.

Years ago, the Tylers were big believers in community-supported agriculture (CSA). They ran a shared vegetable garden on their farm from 1994 to 2015, offering up to 70 different crops to subscribers, who paid for what they took away. "The model is possible, but it's difficult work," she said.

They still offer plots on their land to people who want to grow their own food, though numbers have been fleeting. She believes the path to success for those looking to start out, no matter the size or scope of the operation, is talking to those already in the industry.

The forum is free to attend, with people being asked to register online at harvesthaliburton.com.

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Right to left: administrative assistant Catherine Mark, gynecologist Dr. Jennifer Mark, RPN Cecilia Crighton, and manager outpatient services, Susan Farrar. *Submitted.*

Pap-a-Palooza comes to Minden

By Lisa Gervais

Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) says its Women's Health Clinic will be bringing a second Pap-a-Palooza event Dec. 16.

This past June, the clinic hosted its first event, completing 25 HPV tests for attached and unattached patients; a key milestone in enhancing access to preventative screening, said Lauren Ernst, chief communications officer for HHHS.

Ernst said the events offer another opportunity for residents to receive timely and essential care.

"We know that women across northern and rural Ontario often face long wait times or must travel great distances to receive care," said gynecologist Dr. Jennifer Mark, a physician at the clinic.

She added, "our goal is to reduce those barriers by providing compassionate, comprehensive care right here in the community so our patients can get the help they need without leaving home."

Since opening, the clinic has welcomed patients from as far away as Huntsville, drawn by accessibility and a commitment to patient-centered care, Ernst said.

She added many patients have expressed gratitude for the clinic's efficient scheduling and ability to provide same-day procedures, such as colposcopies, during their initial consultations. A colposcopy is a medical diagnostic procedure to visually examine the cervix as well as the vagina and vulva using a colposcope. The main goal of colposcopy is to prevent cervical cancer by detecting and treating precancerous lesions early.

HHHS interim president and CEO Jennifer Burns West said, "having this kind of specialized care close to home means so much to our patients. It's another example of how we're working to strengthen access to healthcare in the Highlands; helping our residents stay healthy, supported, and connected to care within their own community."

The clinic is located at the Minden Health Hub at 4575 Deep Bay Rd., using the Urgent Care Clinic entrance. Women's Health Clinics are held four days per month.

Dr. Mark has a special interest in perimenopause and menopause. She also manages other common gynecological concerns, including irregular bleeding, contraception / IUD, and abnormal cervical screening results. Dr. Mark is equipped to perform various outpatient procedures, including colposcopy, hysteroscopy, Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure (LEEP), and IUD insertion and removal.

Patients must have a referral form from their family doctor or nurse practitioner to obtain an appointment with the gynecologist. However, the clinic accepts appointments for cervical screening for unattached patients. If you have other gynecological concerns, obtain a referral form from a walk-in clinic, or an online virtual care provider.

Referral forms can be found at https://www.hhhs.ca/community-programs/womens-clinic or call 705-286-2140 ext. 3902

More patients rostered

Meanwhile, as of October 2025, the Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Ontario Health Team said it is "pleased to report" that: 700 new patients are being attached at the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Organization; and 100-plus new patients are being attached to nurse practitioners and/or family physicians' practices in Bobcaygeon, Woodville and Lindsay.

Executive director, Stephanie MacLaren, said "various primary care providers across the KLH-OHT geography continue to expand capacity to welcome more patients as they build capacity across the system."

She further encouraged everyone seeking a local provider to register with Health Care Connect. "We are grateful for the Ontario government's investment in primary care and the work of the Primary Care Action Team," she said.

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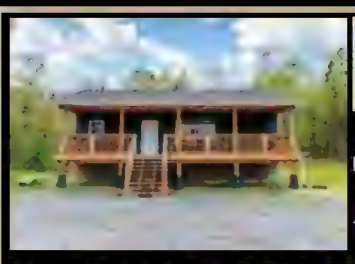

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The kids are alright and going back to class

By Mike Baker

Hal High has been singled out as one of the shining lights of a student attendance pilot Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) rolled out at five schools during the 2024-25 school year.

The project was designed to spark engagement in the classroom and get students with persistent absences excited about going to school. It was implemented in the County at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School (HHSS) and J.D. Hodgson Elementary School, and beyond at Parkview Public School in Lindsay, Riverside Public School in Huntsville, and Grandview Public School in Bethany.

"During this project, we monitored over 800 students, and we did see an average eight per cent increase in students at these schools attending 90 per cent or greater of their school days last year," said TLDSB superintendent Tanya Fraser.

The sole high school participating in the program, HHSS saw a 16 per cent increase in the number of students boasting a 90 per cent attendance record or higher.

Last year, the Ministry of Education issued attendance benchmarks to public school boards, challenging them to ensure individual schools have an overall attendance record of 90 per cent or more. At the time, TLDSB had 68 per cent of elementary-aged students and 46 per cent of high schoolers hitting that target.

TLDSB spokesperson Carolynne Bull said the board is using 80 per cent as its benchmark for acceptable student attendance. At Hal High, 88 per cent of students are hitting that number, so too are 85 per cent of elementary-aged kids.

Fraser said the five pilot schools altered the way they took attendance, moving to tracking period-by-period with messages sent home for any unexplained absence. Each school also hired a dedicated 'attendance champion' who was responsible for monitoring and analyzing attendance data, meeting with youth to find out what was keeping them from schools, and developing individual plans for students to improve attendance.

She said common barriers included: lack of a foundational routine (sleep, hygiene, nutrition and screen time limits); social and separation anxiety; bullying; food and housing insecurity; and parent-child conflict.

Fraser said staff would "assess the barriers and try to understand the root causes of absenteeism," which she said turned up positive results.

"In terms of solutions, we found that understanding our communities and what an individual child needs was very important. Increasing communication, building positive relationships between home and school, and ongoing mental health promotion all helped," Fraser said.

She talked about how students can help motivate one another to attend class – three Grade 6 classrooms in one school ran a two-week attendance contest last year, with the winning class getting a pizza party. The average attendance for the three classes was 97.5 per cent.

"As students get older, they're old enough to set their own goals, to be motivated and know why coming to school is important. We found students started to have conversations in their morning friend circle… about going to bed at good times and coming to school in the best shape possible," Fraser said.

TLDSB director of learning Wes Hahn said a high number of students are exhibiting signs of anxiety – he said all schools have access to mental health counsellors, who can offer some supports and refer students to specialists in their community should they need further help.

The board has expanded the pilot board-wide this coming school year, with it being implemented at seven high schools and 27 elementary schools.

"We are moving beyond the pilot because every school in TLDSB needs to address the students who aren't there.

TLDSB says a pilot project tested at Hal High and J.D. Hodgson Elementary in the 2024-25 school year is being expanded to cover all schools board-wide. *File.*

This is all of our work… to make our schools as inviting a place as possible for students to learn," Fraser said.

Work to do

Hahn said TLDSB has data that shows students living in poverty and/or challenging situations aren't achieving as much as those with more stable backgrounds.

"We have a report that looks at our student census in conjunction with EQAO (public education testing in reading, writing and math)… it looked at Indigenous students, students with disabilities, students with either one, three or four parents/guardians in the home, and students who do not have parents or guardians in full-time employment.

"We've been able to look at our results the way students are achieving in our system and apply to those areas in the census to see what we can do to make things better for those experiencing socio-economic difficulties," Hahn said. "Socio-economic diversity was the greatest source of achievement disproportionality."

He said the board is striving to help students even when they're not at school. One way of doing that is ramping up engagement with parents – he said a new platform where parents can ask and answer questions and provide student/course feedback went live Oct 28. You can access it at engage.tldsb.ca

Hahn said the board is also planning a series of meet and greets with parents, saying he hopes to set up meetings with school principals and parent councils from all schools this school year.

Junior highlanders

Bringing home the hardware

The Hal High Red Hawks senior boys' volleyball team secured the Kawartha Championship on Tuesday (Nov. 4) after a 3-0 straight set win over Peterborough's Ecole Monseigneur Jamot in the final, played on home soil in Haliburton. The eight-man Red Hawks team defeated Port Hope High School in the semi-final earlier in the day. The school will now host the Central Ontario Secondary Schools Association (COSSA) finals on Nov. 11.

Top: The Red Hawks team poses with the Kawartha championship. Back: coach Mike Gaffney, Carlito Barbosa, Isaac Borgdorff, Josh Scheffee, Chase Winder, Ben McMahon, Evan Backus and coach Justin Collins. Front: Graham Backus and Owen Whittaker. Top right: McMahon powers the ball back into Ecole Monseigneur Jamot territory. Middle right: Evan Backus watches a play unfold. Bottom left: Whittaker fires the ball over the net in the Red Hawks' win over Ecole Monseigneur Jamot. Bottom second: Scheffee sets himself for a serve. Bottom third: Barbosa keeps his eyes on the ball after a Ecole Monseigneur Jamot serve. Bottom right: Winder, Whittaker and Scheffee celebrate winning a key point. *Photos by Mike Baker.*

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Highlander community

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Sealed tenders are to be clearly marked "Tender RFT-07-2025 2010, International Tandem Plow Truck or RFT-08-2025 - 2014, International Tandem Plow Truck" and submitted to the attention of the contact provided below:

Municipality of Highlands East
2249 Loop Road, Box 295
Wilberforce, ON K0L 3C0
Attn: Brittany McCaw, CAO/Treasurer

Deadline for Tender Submissions: Friday, November 28th, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

For further details and to download the appropriate tender document, please visit the municipal website at www.highlandseast.ca

SIRCH launches Nathan's Farm

On Oct. 20, SIRCH Community Services officially launched Nathan's Farm Project at the SIRCH Bistro & Bakery, at 49 Maple Ave. in Haliburton. The initiative introduces 12 hydroponic grow towers inside the Bistro, producing fresh, nutritious greens year-round. The harvests will be used daily in Bistro offerings. For the first time, produce grown from the towers will also be featured in SIRCH's Lunch Is On Us program, where every Wednesday community members are welcomed into the Bistro for a free nutritious meal. Guests will now enjoy salads and dishes featuring tower-grown greens, even in the middle of winter. "This project reflects our values of levelling the playing field and creating a ripple effect of positive change," said Gena Robertson, executive director of SIRCH. "By investing in hydroponic towers, we're ensuring that everyone in our community, regardless of income, can access healthy, locally-grown food in a safe, welcoming space." At the launch, people heard about the history of Nathan's Farm, why the towers were introduced, and SIRCH's future vision for food security in Haliburton. For more information on Nathan's Urban Farm go to www.enuf.farm. Nathan's Farm Project is made possible through the Nathan T. Deslippe Memorial Fund and Medavie Foundation, honouring Nathan's legacy of compassion, innovation, and community impact. *(Lisa Gervais)*

The launch of the farm project was held Oct. 20. *Submitted.*

Tackling food insecurity

On Oct. 20, 100 Women Who Care presented a cheque for $12,700 to SIRCH at the Bistro to support their community meals program, which provides meals for many of those experiencing food insecurity in our area. Co-chair Leslie Banner said 128 members voted to support the charity at their October meeting. "We are deeply appreciative of the commitment members have made to donate $100 three times a year to a local charity nominated and selected by them," Banner said. SIRCH marketing manager, Laurie McCaig, added the support "helps us continue to nourish our community through vital food programs and initiatives." *(Lisa Gervais)*

Members of 100 Women Who Care Haliburton County, SIRCH staff, and Community Kitchen volunteers. *Submitted.*

Highlander events

Tales of war

Acclaimed author, journalist and broadcaster Linden MacIntyre filled the Haliburton Legion Nov. 2 as he visited Haliburton County for an afternoon discussion about his new book *An Accidental Villian.* The book recounts a soldier's tale of war, deceit and exile – based on the story of First World War major general Sir Hugh Tudor, a close friend of former U.K. prime minister Winston Churchill. The event was organized by the Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library, with proceeds (tickets were $25) supporting programming at all libraries across the County. *(Mike Baker)*

Top: Linden MacIntyre, a staple of CBC's *The Fifth Estate*, was at the Haliburton Legion on Sunday to discuss his latest book *An Accidental Villain*. Bottom: MacIntyre filled the room, with over 100 Highlanders sitting in on his talk.
Photos by Steve Sherwood.

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The Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association (HHOA) is pleased to invite members and the public to our **Annual General Meeting** to be held on **November 23, 2025** at the Haliburton Fish Hatchery Meeting Hall (6712 Gelert Rd.) between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

This year's guest speaker is Mitch Klatt from Rapala Canada with information on Rapala fishing products and knowledge to improve your fishing experience on our many inland lakes in Haliburton County.

A summary of the HHOA's activities for the past year will be shared as well as the last fiscal year's financial report. The opportunity for invitations of prospective HHOA Board directors will take place as well. This commitment leads to becoming involved in the workings of the HHOA and assisting in maintaining Haliburton County as a premier Outdoor Activity destination in the Province of Ontario and beyond.

Light refreshments will be available.

Highlander events

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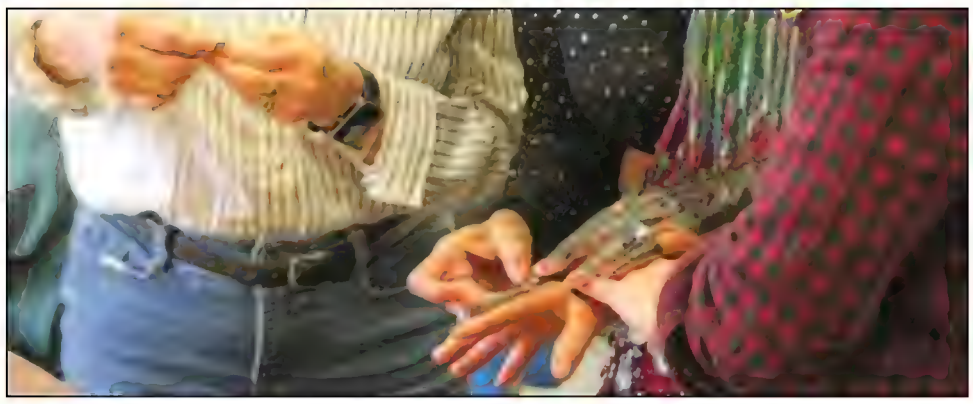

Top: Cooper Penick and Levi Warburton make Diya lamps. Bottom: Henna hands. *Photos by Lisa Gervais.*

Celebrating Diwali in the Highlands

By Lisa Gervais

The Minden Hills branch of the Haliburton County Public Library hosted a Diwali celebration Nov. 1. Local volunteer, Yasmin Schoenke, was on hand for an afternoon of music, dancing, crafts, and culture. Visitors created their own clay diya (oil lamp), and tried henna designs.

Meanwhile, Dance Happens Here Haliburton (DH^3) is partnering with local businesspeople to once again bring Diwali to the Haliburton Legion Nov. 15. There will be Indian food, lively music and dancing.

Schoenke will perform and lead interactive dances. Music will be provided by DJ Karim Khimji of Safari Sounds. A simple meal will be provided by Lindsay's Masala Kraft for a true taste of India, including some Diwali treats.

Spokesperson Myra Stephen said, "the universal theme of celebrating the light is found in the traditions of many cultures as we move towards the short days of winter. Diwali, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a major Hindu festival held each fall fostering a sense of unity, love, and gratitude.

"It symbolizes the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance through various cultural, religious, and social practices. It's a time for new beginnings, happiness, offerings of food and Indian sweets, dancing and bringing good luck into your life."

The event is suitable for adults, youth and children

Tickets are $40 for adults, $20 for students and children under 18 are free. Tickets are available online at www.dancehappenshere.com or at Redmans Records. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

For more information see www.dancehappenshere.com

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Kaiden Thatcher is one of the Huskies co-alternate captains this year. *Photo by Tim Bates/OJHL Images*

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Husky Kaiden Thatcher's been a leader his whole life

By Lisa Gervais

Haliburton County Husky, Kaiden Thatcher, came off the ice after warm-ups before the first game of the season Sept. 6 to find an 'A' stitched into his jersey.

The team has yet to name a captain, with Thatcher and Isaac Larmand serving as alternate captains so far this year.

The big second-year defenseman said it came as somewhat of a shock.

But, "at the same time, I'm not surprised. I think I've been a leader my whole life. It's kind of who I am, and my personality," he told *The Highlander* this week.

"I think I bring a lot of energy to the room. I get the guys going. I lead by example."

The 6-foot-4, 205 lb. D-man says the added responsibility has been good for him, helping him to dial in a little more both on the ice and in the dressing room.

Born in 2007, he is a young alternate captain. He jokes he is trying to be a kid but it makes him realize he has to be more of an adult "and lead the guys in the room, the younger guys especially."

The Huskies are a decidedly younger team this year than last, especially after trading goalie Stephen Toltl.

Asked what it is like working with Larmand, Thatcher said "great." It helps that the two billet together in the same house, so can talk hockey after they leave the rink. The D-man said they are like brothers.

"We'll talk about what we can do better. We've had multiple player-only meetings when we were in a bit of slump at the start of the season, to try to get the boys going and trying to see what the problem was."

They chalked it up to rookies being a bit too comfortable at the start, and not understanding Husky hockey and systems.

"We have a ton of skill; it's just trying to get them to understand that junior hockey isn't like minor hockey at all… everything's a lot faster. They were overcomplicating things and we had to tell them to just keep it simple and stick to their game." He said watching a ton of video is helping.

Thatcher's experience playing games with the OHL's Peterborough Petes last year has helped.

He added he and Larmand have different personalities they bring to their roles.

"I'm definitely the bad cop; more vocal than him. He's definitely more of the nice guy. He'll be more understanding and I kind of rip into them a bit – and it works."

The team has come off of a rare weekend off, last on the ice Oct. 28 against Newmarket before playing in Buffalo Nov. 5. However, they have been in the gym and at the rink.

Thatcher said he is seeing improvement and the team has set a lofty goal of winning nine of 11 games in November.

"These past couple of games, we've been playing a lot better; just preaching the whole get the pucks to the net kind of thing. That's helped. This year, we have not been too offensive of a team, so it's all about getting pucks to the net, score more dirty goals, we're not as skilled as last year, quite yet."

The team is back home Nov. 8 against the Wellington Dukes. Puck drop is scheduled for 4 p.m.

Home of the Highland Storm

Matthew Mueller carries the puck into the Millbrook end. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

Storm shoot for the stars

The Highland Storm Minden Pharmasave U15 local league team faced off against the Millbrook Stars on Saturday, Nov. 1 at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden.

This amazing team embodied the words 'teamwork' and 'effort' from the first drop of the puck.

Travis Mann was all business, scoring the first and final goal of the game. Gibson Pockett followed the Storm's first goal a minute later with a perfectly placed backhand shot, then with half a second left in the first period, team captain Jaxon Hurd buried the puck.

To the delight of the cheering crowd, assistant captain Moss Davis and Nash Wilson each added two goals to the Storm's total. Mackay Windover went end-to-end, weaving between players, delivering an incredible goal. Ben Cowen left his mark with solid effort displayed throughout the entire match.

Defending the game, assistant captain Matt Mueller was ever-present; swatting away countless attempts by the Stars, and fearless Evelyn Mardus consistently held the line for her team. Goalie Colten Simms awed everyone with his repeated deflections, and made catching a puck in midair look effortless.

AP players Beau Gilmour and Nolan Frybort filled in with constant backup to the team, after just playing in a game with their own team (U13) prior.

The impressive and unrelenting skills of Connor Iles, Hunter Davidson and Wes Cowen were definitely missed.

The final score was 9-2 and we look forward to more from this great team, led by coaches Jeff Iles and Stew Hurd, with support from trainers Dawn Hurd and Jeff Wilson. *(Submitted)*

SCORE BOARD

Oct. 29 U15 Minden Pharmasave vs Lindsay 5-4 W

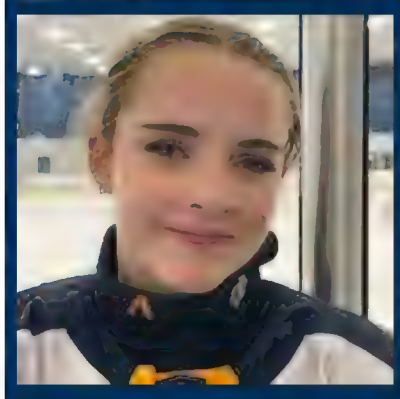
Nov. 1 U11 Rep Tom Prentice & Sons vs Orono 6-3
U13 Casey's Water Well & Geothermal vs Durham 4-1 L
U11 Carquest Minden vs Brock 3-1 W
U15 Minden Pharmasave vs Millbrook 9-2 W
U15 Rep Cheryl Smith RE/MAX vs Durham 5-2 W

Nov. 2 U11 Minden Carquest vs Durham (Score not noted)
U15 The Pepper Mill Steak & Pasta House vs Mariposa 5-3 W
U15 Minden Pharmasave vs Kawartha 7-1 W
U13 REP Curry Chevrolet vs Douro 8-1
U15 REP Cheryl Smith RE/MAX vs Orono 5-0 L

STARS of the WEEK

NASH WILSON

Nash leads with his energy and vision, and plays big minutes in critical situations; two goals and four assists.



EVELYN MARDUS

Evelyn defends with fierce intensity, and is a player you want on the ice when the game is on the line.

GIBSON POCKETT

'Gibby', who always brings a positive attitude, played his best game of the year with his first goal of the season and an assist.

Photos by Tim Tofflemire.

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What's on

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Office open 9 a.m. to noon, clubroom closed. Bridge at 1 p.m.
Tuesdays: Games and cards night starting at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome. Fun darts at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid euchre 1 p.m. start, Remembrance Hall. Bingo, doors open at 5 p.m. with a 7 p.m. start time, Remembrance Hall. Snack bar available from 5:30 p.m. – French fries and hot dogs available while supplies last.
Thursdays: General meeting third Thursday of the month, ladies auxiliary meeting last Thursday of the month.
Fridays: meat draw, five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts 4:30 p.m. onwards. 50/50 draw at 5 p.m., tickets are $1 and available in the clubroom. Beginning July 4, board games for seniors from 10 a.m. to noon.
Saturdays: Open only for special events Clubroom hours: Monday 3-9 p.m., Tues 5-9 p.m., Wed/Thurs 3-6 p.m., Fri 3-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday closed.
Upcoming events: Drum circle Nov. 16, Dec. 7, Jan. 4, with a 1 p.m. start time.

Royal Canadian Legion - Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden

Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday to Thursday with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' Tuesday.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 11 a.m.

Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
Weekly activities:
Karaoke: call for dates
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1-3 p.m., Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.

The Remembrance Day service will commence at 10:45 a.m. Nov. 11 with the Act of Remembrance and reading of the County honour roll at 11 a.m., followed by the wreath laying ceremony and closing remarks.

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 624 Wilberforce

Monday: open 7 to 10 p.m. Nov. 10, 17 and 24 is darts at 7 p.m. $5/player
Tuesday: closed, special events only Nov. 11 is the Remembrance Day service at the Cenotaph at 11 a.m. Lunch at the Legion to follow.
Wednesday: open 2 to 10 p.m. Nov. 12, 19 and 26 is darts at 2 p.m. $5/player. There's also quick supper from 5 to 6:30 p.m., with the menu changing weekly. Cost is $10 per person. And Cribbage League starts at 6:30 p.m.
Thursday: open 2 to 10 p.m. Nov. 6, 13, 20 and 27 cornhole at 7 p.m. Nov. 13 and 27 HHHS Social Rec 10 a.m.
Friday: open 2 to 11 p.m.
Nov. 14 and 28 Community Care 55+ Lunch $17, at noon; Fish and chips, one piece $15, two piece $20 . Nov. 7 and 21 is wings and jam session from 5 to 8 p.m. $15 per pound.
Saturday: open 2 to 9 p.m. Nov. 15, 29 is open mic from 2 to 6 p.m. Nov. 15 is the fall dance from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., free admission. Nov. 29 is trivia night at 7 p.m. $5/player.

EVENTS

SIRCH Community Services has launched its annual 'Gift from the Heart' fundraising campaign. Money helps SIRCH staff prepare healthy, nutritious meals through its community kitchen and lunch is on us programs. Last year, SIRCH provided over 21,000 free meals to the community. To give, visit sirch.on.ca/donate or call 705-457-1742.

Nov. 6, 1 p.m. Rosies of the North (1999) will be screened at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre. It tells the story of the women who worked at the Canadian Car and Foundry plant in Fort William (now Thunder Bay), Ontario, during World War II.

Nov. 7-9, all day. The Haliburton International Film Festival returns to Haliburton County, with seven movies being shown at two locations (Highlands Cinemas in Kinmount and the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion in Haliburton). For more information, visit www.thoseothermovies.com.

Nov. 8, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. SIRCH Community Services is in the midst of its Share the Warmth campaign, offering free winter gear to people in need. Staff will be at St. Paul's Anglican Church to give away coats, boots, hats, mittens and scarves. There are other opportunities at SIRCH Bistro Nov. 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and at the Thrift Warehouse in Bancroft Nov. 15 from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Nov. 8, 4 to 6:30 p.m. Hunter's supper at Highland Grove Community Centre, located at 5373 Loop Rd. Hot turkey dinner with all the fixings, with pie for dessert. Adults cost $20 and children aged 5-10 costing $8. All proceeds support the Highland Grove Historical Society.

Nov. 9, 1 p.m. The Arts Council – Haliburton Highlands is hosting its annual general meeting at the Haliburton Highlands Museum. Register at https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/agm-2025-tickets-1777884172419.

Nov. 10, 1:30 p.m. Pat Casey and Barry Hart will be at the Haliburton Legion to share their families' tail gunner stories from the Second World War. Followed by a screening of the movie The Great Escaper. Free admission. There will be a second talk/movie showing at 6:30 p.m.

Nov. 12, 7 p.m. The 'Telling Our Stories' Speaker Series returns, with Dr. Nell Thomas speaking at the HHOA Fish Hatchery on Gelert Road. Thomas' presentation will focus on the emergence of artificial intelligence. Tickets are $15. Contact Barrie Martin at 705-457-7557 or barrieinthehighlands@gmail.com.

Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. CASC Ice Race Division is hosting two webinars teaching people all about ice racing. Taking Nov. 13 and Dec. 11 at 7:30 p.m. Learn how to get started, what cars make the cut, and why this winter sport is unlike anything else. For more information, visit www.casc.on.ca/ice-racing.

Nov. 15, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Haliburton Legion Auxiliary is holding its annual craft sale, with more than 40 talented artists selling an array of homemade goods. This is a great opportunity to start your Christmas shopping. Admission is by a food or monetary donation to the 4Cs Food Bank.

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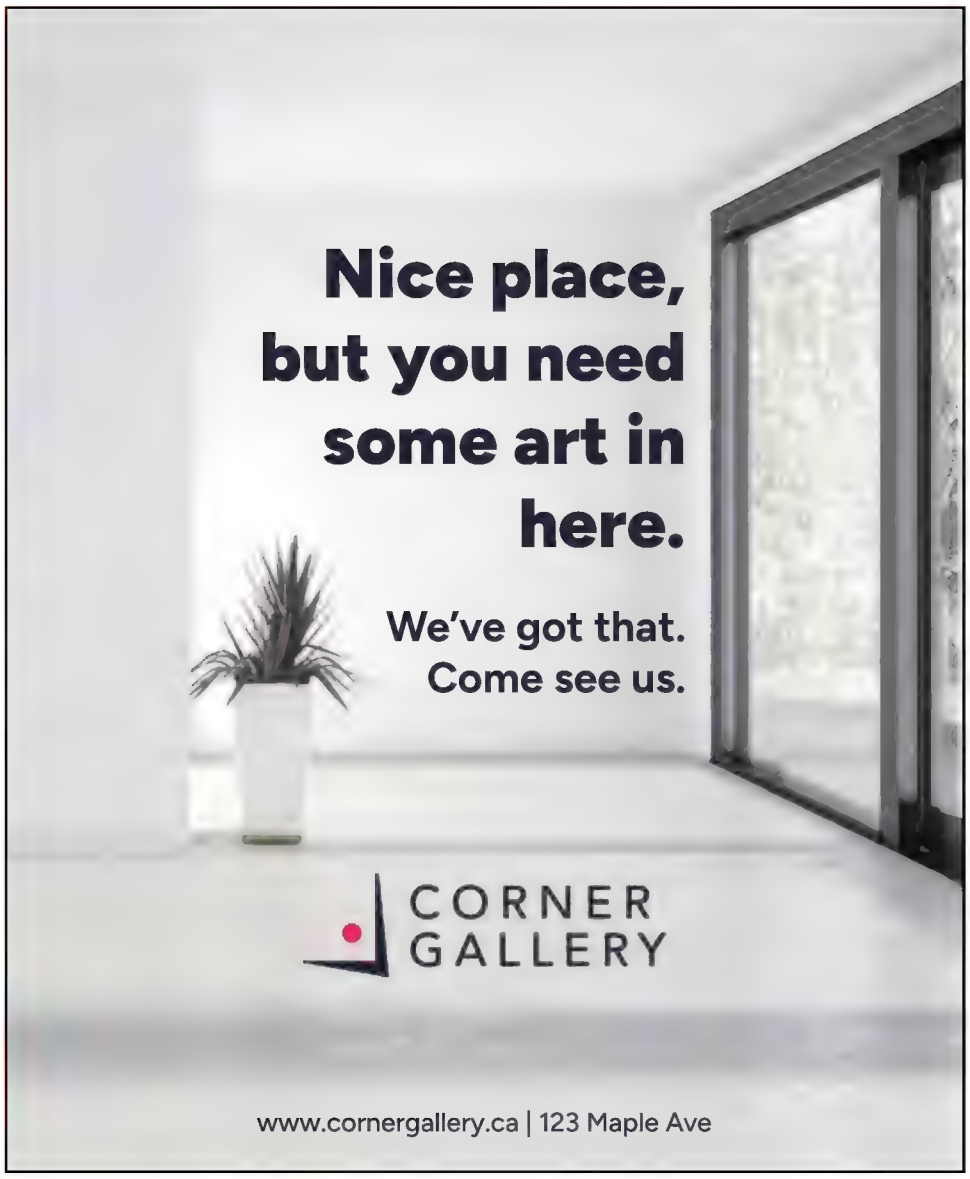

Taste of Highlands for Heat Bank

By Lisa Gervais

This year's Heat Bank dinner and auction is entering a new chapter - with a fresh venue and chefs joining forces from the County's top restaurants.

Rhubarb Restaurant in Carnarvon has hosted the event in support of Heat Bank Haliburton County for 11 years. After last year's tickets sold out almost instantly, co-owner Terri Mathews-Carl envisioned expanding the event and invited neighbouring restaurants, Bonnie View Inn, the Post House, Dimensions Retreats, and Juna, to partner for 2025.

"This event has always been about a sense of community coming together," said Mathews-Carl, owner of Rhubarb and Juna. "Over the years, we've shared incredible meals and moments that translated into real community support. It just felt natural to invite more neighbours to the table to build on that sense of friends helping friends."

With the event relocating to Bonnie View Inn, it is expected to nearly double in size, hosting more than 100 dinner guests.

Mathews-Carl said "in scale, it will be a spectacular community gathering - made possible by the camaraderie between these five local establishments."

Tina Jackson, of Central Food Network and Heat Bank's executive director, said, "neighbours helping neighbours is exactly what is at the heart of Heat Bank. We are always stronger when we work together, and it's so special to see this same spirit reflected in the fundraiser."

There will be live music with the Nicholas Russell and Carling Stephen. *File.*

The Post House owner, Heather Milstein, added, "when Terri reached out, we were so excited to get involved. Collaborating with fellow restaurants allows us to combine our strengths and creativity to support the community in a meaningful way."

The night begins at 6 p.m. Nov. 9 with a cocktail hour followed by a four-course dinner; each course by a chef from Rhubarb, Juna, Dimensions Retreats, and the Post House. There will be live music and the evening will conclude with a live auction.

Jackson said that as of July, Heat Bank Haliburton County had already responded to 223 calls for assistance — nearly matching the total for all of last year before the heating season has started for the upcoming winter. She said Haliburton County has one of the highest rates of energy poverty in Canada. Rising costs and financial uncertainty mean that more people are reaching out for support.

Heat Bank provides practical solutions, including: delivering firewood and other heating fuels during cold seasons; assisting with applications for hydro grants and cost savings; advocating with hydro companies to establish fair payment plans; assessment and personalized support.

Tickets are $150 each. To reserve your seat, contact Terri at 705-489-4449.

Minden Hills
In Season Every Season
Tree Lighting Ceremony
November 14th, 2025
6:00pm-8:00pm at the Village Green
Come and help decorate the tree, sing some carols and kick off this festive season at the Village Green located along Bobcaygeon Road between Water and Newcastle St.
Santa Claus Parade
November 15th, 2025
Parade Start at 11am!
The parade will begin at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena, continue along Parkside Street and head south on Bobcaygeon Road, before finishing at the Township municipal parking lot off Milne Street.
Non-perishable food items will be collected during the parade.
For more information visit https://www.mindenhills.ca/events/

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FOR SALE - Christmas Jams and jellies, stocking stuffers, garlic and garlic powder and seed garlic. 1434 Kashagawigamog Lake Road, 2.2k from County Road 21. 705-286-2627 or 705-457-0090. Highland Garlic will now be Open until November 23. To all of our customers, Have a safe and Happy Holiday Season and we will see you next year.

FOR SALE – ATV Arctic Cat 550, with 240 hrs. $6,000. ATV Blade, 5 ft $300. Please call 613-630-0247

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EVENT

EVENT - HALIBURTON LEGION CRAFT SALE, SATURDAY NOVEMBER 15th 10:00-3:00. Start your Christmas shopping with crafts created by 40 vendors. The Auxiliary ladies will be serving soup, sandwiches and sweets in the Schofield Room Cafe. (Nov 6)

NOTICE

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS - Sundays - 10:30 am at St. Anthony's, 27 Victoria Street Haliburton. Wednesdays - 7:00 PM at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle St. in Minden - rear door. Thinking about alcohol. Thinking about stopping. We've been there. We can help!

AL ANON- WE CARE, are you troubled by someone's drinking? Meetings: Thursdays 7 p.m., St. Anthony's 27 Victoria Street, Haliburton, and Mondays 7 p.m. at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle, Rear Entrance, Minden. 1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666) al-anon.org All are welcome.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS Admission is free and the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. This meeting is for addicts only. New meeting in Haliburton that meets every Thursday from 7:30-8:30 p.m. at 83 Maple Ave. Unit 7A in Haliburton Halco Plaza, behind Castle Antiques. For more information and an online version visit www.cloana.org or call 1-888-811-3887

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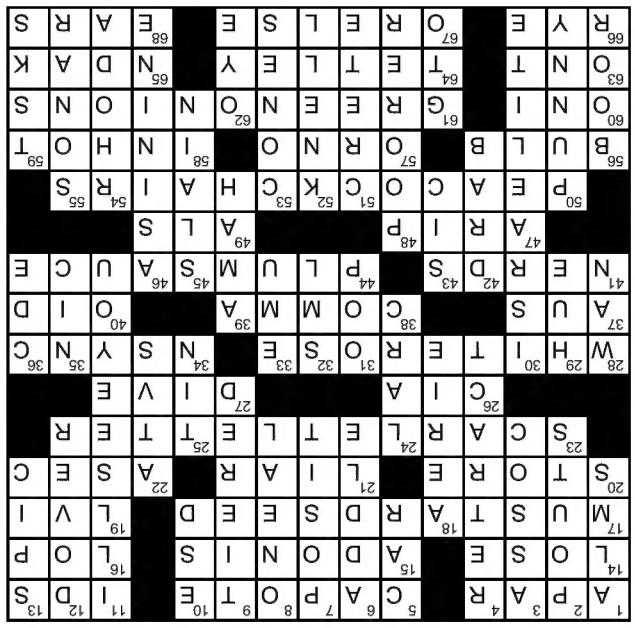
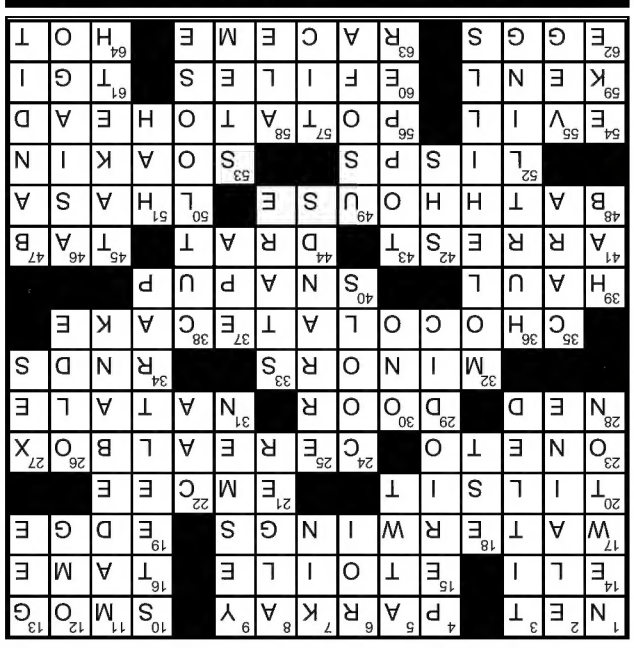
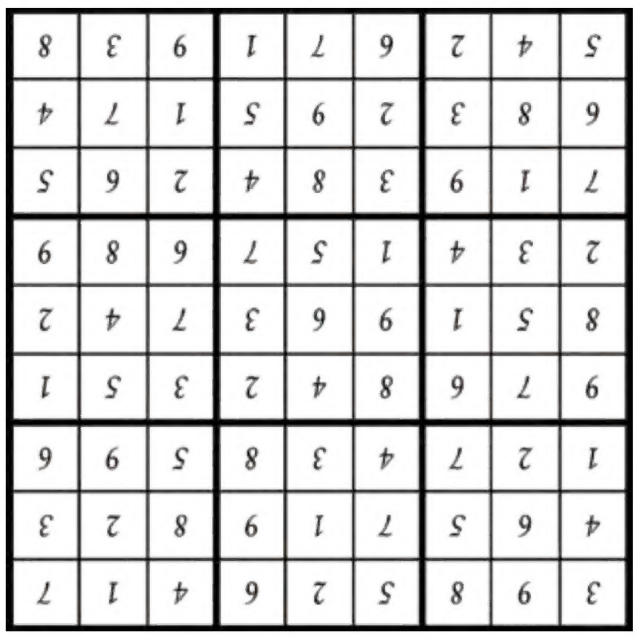


THIS WEEK'S SOLUTIONS





OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Barry Wilson

With deep Christlike love and gratitude for a life well lived, the West Guilford Baptist Church family of Barry Richard Wilson announces his peaceful passing into the waiting arms of Jesus our Lord and Saviour on Friday, October 31st, at the age of 83.

Barry was a conservationist. He spent countless hours studying, rescuing, and photographing wildlife. He was passionate about sharing his knowledge and gave many seminars and wrote many stories teaching others. He loved his Tim Horton large Triple Triples, blueberry pie, and a good game of crokinole, which he almost always won.

Barry will be fondly remembered by the many friends he made while being patiently and tenderly cared for by the staff and volunteers of Highland Wood during the past 2 years.

Barry will forever be remembered by all who knew him for his unique personality and passionate love of everything wildlife, especially his first love, the beaver.

Barry was more at home with animals than he was with people, and he struggled when he lost his independence and couldn't spend his time outside with his animal friends. But like his beaver friends who are known for their hard work and resilience, Barry has finished his race and has entered his eternal home that his Father God has prepared for him and is now free to spend his days enjoying God's perfect world prepared for those who have put their trust in Him.

Visitation & Funeral Service

Friends are invited to call at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 Hwy. 118 Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0 (705) 457-9209 on Thursday afternoon, November 6, 2025, at 1 o'clock for a service in the Chapel (Visitation one hour prior). An Interment will take place the following day, Friday morning, November 7, at 11:00 am at the Marchmont Baptist Cemetery in Orillia. As an expression of sympathy, donations to West Guilford Baptist Church, Woodland Wildlife Sanctuary, or the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation - Highland Wood would be appreciated.

Community Funeral Home

In Loving Memory of

Eldon Roy McCracken

(Retired Employee of the Township of Minden Hills Roads Department for 43 years)

Passed away peacefully at home in Minden on Friday, October 31, 2025, at the age of 94.

Beloved husband of Laureen May McCracken (nee Arbuthnot) for 77 years. Loving father of Dorothy (the late Al) Sharkey and Sylvia (Andy) Campbell. Special Gramps to John (Jessica), Janean, Jordan, Mackie, and great grandfather of Evan and Charlotte. Dear brother of Mary (Dale-deceased) Trumbull, Leslie (Judy) McCracken, and predeceased by his sister and brother-in-law Eleanor (Ron) Arbuthnot. Fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, family and friends.

In keeping with Eldon's wishes, cremation has taken place and a private family interment will be held at the 12 Mile Lake Cemetery, Carnarvon.

Special Thanks to Dr. Haley Hatch, Dr. Norman Bottum, Nurse Holly and the Haliburton Medical Centre for all the loving care and support during this time.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) or the Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

"The family would like you to raise a glass to Eldon."

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

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In Loving Memory of

Robert "Rob" J. Dillane

Passed away suddenly at the Kingston General Hospital with his family and friends at his side on Friday, October 24, 2025, at the age of 49.

Loving husband of Robin (nee Flood), cherished dad to Michael. Dear son of Marilyn and the late Tom Dillane, brother of Wendy (Bryan), James (Amy) and brother-in-law to Shane Flood. Uncle to Tom and Sam, always remembered by Grant, Brock (Karla) and by his family and friends.

Rob was a kind and loving person, who gave his heart and soul to his family. He enjoyed spending the day in his boat fishing or going ATVing with his son, spending time enjoying life's moments with his little family, telling a good Dad joke and always ready to debate most topics. He was taken way too soon and is deeply missed.

Thank you to the EMS, Staff at Haliburton ER, and the ICU staff at Kingston General Hospital for their compassion and care.

A Celebration of Rob's Life will take place in the summer of 2026.

Memorial Donations can be made to Michael's Future (donations should be made to Robin Dillane or Shane Flood in Trust for Michael Dillane) and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0 or at any TD Canada Trust (please use the following when donating –Transit No. 30422, Inst. No 004 Account 6427239.

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In Loving Memory of

Helen Mills

It is with great love and the appreciation of a life very well lived that we announce the passing of Helen Mills on October 27, 2025. She passed away very peacefully at Highland Wood, Haliburton, in her 101st year.

Helen was predeceased by her beloved husband of 69 years, John Mills, and is survived by her children, Coulie, Doug, Karen, and Liz (Bruce), as well as grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and grand-dogs.

Helen was raised in St. Thomas and Windsor but lived her married life in Etobicoke with summers at Haliburton Lake. She enjoyed bridge with her special group and had an incredibly artistic eye, whether it was fashion, interior design, art, or culture. She was an avid reader and enjoyed the theatre and film. John's career allowed them to travel extensively, and she took full advantage of each destination to see some incredible sites. Well into her 90s, Helen's favourite places were Sherway Gardens, or any restaurant!

In the summers, she swam, tended her plants, and even water-skied into her 60s. She and John had a very special group of friends on Haliburton Lake, and those friendships have continued with the generations.

She loved to laugh and had a great sense of humour, and she was also an incredible listener – she looked you in the eye and made you feel like you were the only person in the room. She cared deeply about all those close to her. She was also incredibly kind. She cared about animals, and people less fortunate than she was. Every time she ventured into downtown Toronto, she would take money in a special zippered pouch to give to any unhoused people she came across. She could be overzealous and on one occasion, she pressed money into the palm of an executive that was just outside on a smoke break. She was extremely aware of how fortunate she was and wished the same for everyone.

Helen and John provided a lovely life to their children.

Very special thanks to the many wonderful people at Gardens of Haliburton and, since spring 2024, Highland Wood. They are too many to name individually. All have been so kind and caring. Mom will miss her wine in a Dixie cup that was part of her routine at Highland Wood!

Private Funeral Arrangements

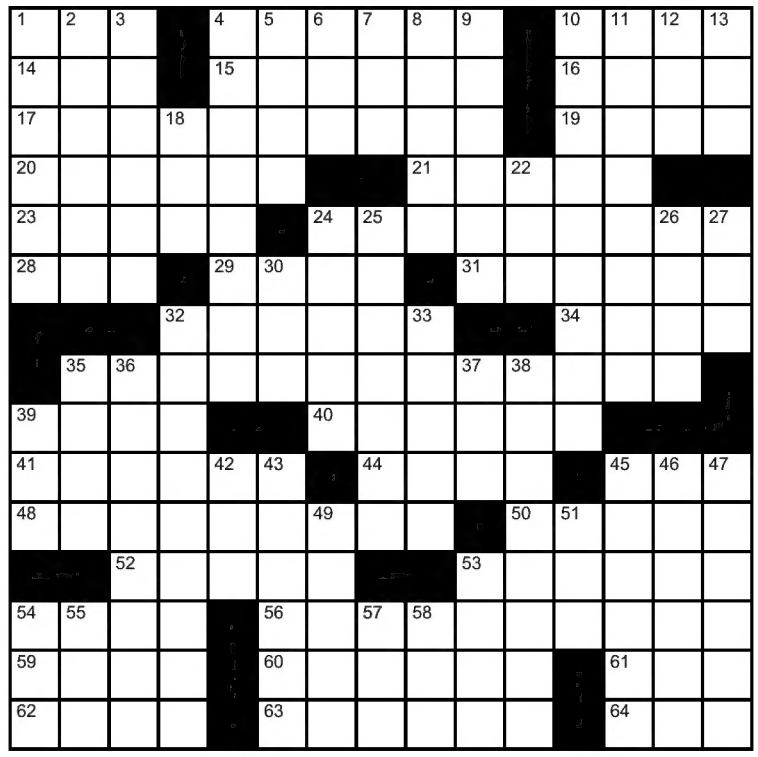
Funeral arrangements are private. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation in Helen's memory would be appreciated by the family. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 Hwy #118, Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0 (705) 457-9209.

Community Funeral Home

Highlander puzzles

One for Two

by Barbara Olson
© ClassiCanadian Crosswords



Across

1 Angler's accessory
4 "The flavor says butter" brand
10 Urban skyline blocker
14 "Book of ___" (Denzel flick)
15 Star, in Ste-Foy
16 Not too blue, in a way
17 *Armwear in a kiddie pool
19 Teetering spot
20 Limburger alternative
21 Conference VIP
23 "It takes ___ know ..." (snide comeback)
24 *Coco Pops container
28 "Game of Thrones" patriarch
29 "Let's Make a Deal" prop
31 "Buon ___!" (Italian Christmas greeting)
32 Nonpro, as sports leagues
34 Boxing segments: Abbr.
35 *Dark brown birthday favourite
39 Tow
40 Nab before someone else does
41 Slap the cuffs on
44 "Dagnabbit!"
45 Pop can opener
48 *Public sauna setting
50 Capital of Tibet
52 Some concerns in speech therapy
53 Absorb fully
54 Heinous
56 *With "Mr.", toy with detachable features
59 ___ Ration (dog food brand)
60 Submits an online return
61 ___ Friday's (restaurant)
62 Food for a Halloween prankster
63 Speedster's dare
64 Word that can precede both parts of the starred clues' answers

Down

1 Olivia ___-John
2 Friend of Jerry and George
3 Like novels and nobility
4 Chemistry table
5 Meas. on a 4-Down table
6 "Vive le ___!"
7 "Banches" on a family tree, e.g.
8 "Rags-to-riches" writer
9 Kowtowing types
10 Sharp mind, metaphorically
11 Raked it in bigtime
12 Texter's "gasp!"
13 Three after dee
18 Right direction, in Québec?
22 Its mbrs. get free towing
24 Puts on ice
25 Gofer's assignments
26 Vintage store descriptor, maybe
27 Some tic-tac-toe marks
30 Palindromic artist
32 The makings of mountains, to some
33 See eye-to-eye in a contest
35 "Fame" actress Irene
36 Moving dangerously fast
37 U.S. eco-friendly org.
38 Go on a wild night out
39 Bell Centre NHLer, to fans
42 "Keep it down" sounds
43 Formal headwear
45 Opposite of giveth
46 Cheese from Italy
47 "Smokey and the ___"
49 "The good ol'" country to the south
51 Derisive laugh
53 Originate (from)
54 ___ out an existence
55 Couch it, with "out"
57 Nervous twitch
58 Draft pick?

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